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SUBJECT: TURKEY AND IDEF: SUPPORT FOR STRONG DOD ATTENDANCE

1. The Embassy supports and encourages direct senior-level Department of Defense participation in the sixth International Defense Industry, Aerospace and Maritime Fair (IDEF) that will be held in Ankara, Turkey, September 30-October 3, 2003.

2. Given the current economic situation in Turkey and the importance Turkey attaches to participation in IDEF as a sign of a country's commitment to a successful business partnership, it is important for the Department of Defense to be represented at this year's IDEF at an appropriate senior level. Countries whose firms often compete with American firms for major contracts here (e.g. Israel, France, Russia) are expected to continue their practice of sending senior defense officials. A strong DOD presence will demonstrate (to both the Turks and American business) strong US backing for American business opportunities in Turkey, and our understanding of the important contributions that industrial cooperation can have on the overall relationship. Strong DOD attendance will also continue to support Alliance interoperability and DCI goals. Conversely, a poor DOD showing could impact negatively future business opportunities for American firms here. Finally, the Foreign Commercial Service (FCS) is recruiting new-to-markets firms to exhibit their products at the USA pavilion. High-level USG presence would be welcome support for these firms.

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